



MINUTES
FAIRFAX OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, June 22, 2021 at 7 p.m.
By Teleconference and Videoconference Only

Fairfax Open Space Members:

Michael Ardito, Co-Secretary	Ruth Horn, Co-Secretary
Chris Borjian	Jack Judkins, Vice Chair
Heather Duplaisir	Susan Pascal Beran, Chair
Diego Gonzalez, Treasurer	Jonathan Sicroff
Brad Handel	Youth Member (ex officio)

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) ADVISORY NOTICE

Consistent with State of California Executive Order Nos. N-25-20 and N-29-20 and the Marin County Public Health Officer's Orders, this meeting will be held via teleconference only. There will not be an in-person physical meeting location.

Members of the public may watch, listen, and participate in the meeting as follows:

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To speak during the public comment period, select the **Raise Hand icon** and you will be added to the speaker queue, and unmuted when it is your turn.

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And Passcode: 349984 at public comment period, **press *9** and you will be added to the speaker queue, and unmuted when it is your turn.

Agenda Preamble / Land Acknowledgement: *The Fairfax Open Space Committee acknowledges that we are located on the un-ceded ancestral lands of the Coast Miwok people of present-day Marin County. We honor with gratitude the land itself and all of its ancestors: past, present and emerging.*

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA (Starts at 7 p.m.)

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call:** Susan Pascal Beran, Chair
Members present: All (including youth member candidate Dylann Cullinane)
Members absent: None
Guests: Chance Cutrano (Town Council liaison); Stephanie Hellman (Town Council member); Frank Egger (former Fairfax mayor); Linda Novy (former FOSC member); Pamela Meigs (former FOSC member); Deborah Lee Benson (Fairfax Tree Committee member); Geoffrey and Linda Bolt; Minna Kim; Tom Bose (Marin Bicycle Coalition); Vernon Huffman; Bill Keene; Justin Avalon (Fairfax resident); “Drew”
- 2. Approval of Agenda and affidavit of posting.** The agenda was approved for tonight. It was posted on the Town’s website and physically on June 18, 2021.
- 3. Open Time for Public Expressions** *(The public is welcome to address the Committee at this time on matters not on the agenda. Please be advised that pursuant to Government Code 54954.2, the Committee is not permitted to take action on any matter not on the agenda, unless it determines that an emergency exists, or that the need to take action arose following posting of the agenda. Each speaker is limited to three minutes and a spokesperson for an organization is limited to five minutes.)* None.
- 4. Cascade Canyon bridges update report:** Linda Novy, former FOSC member and neighbors (discussion and possible action). There was a Zoom and slide presentation by neighbors of the Elliott Nature Preserve (ENP) in Cascade Canyon. Background information documents were emailed to FOSC members prior to the meeting. The presentation was followed by a lengthy discussion. The ENP was sold to the Town in 1976 by Floyd Elliott, to be used for the purpose of preserving natural habits and for “passive recreation.” Ownership of the ENP was subsequently transferred by the Town to the County, so the County could manage and maintain it. The ENP is managed by the Marin County Open Space District. In connection with environmental review of the bridge project under CEQA, the County is in the midst of reviewing numerous comments submitted regarding the bridge upgrades to the preserve. The County’s response to comments will be available in several months and FOSC may elect to hold another information session once the environmental review process is complete. Members of the public pointed out that the ENP is 38.5 acres and the most bio-diverse preserve in Marin. Bill Keene, a resident of Fairfax, said the bridge project is to prevent bikers from crossing the stream, which they now must do, and to protect stream habitat and fish, frogs and other wildlife that may use the riparian habitat. Others claimed that no fish or frogs are present. Many speakers said the ENP is a gem, but some expressed concerns about sustainable biking practices and the impact on the ENP. Speakers noted in particular that the ENP is over-used by bikers, that bikers do not comply with regulations, and that there are impacts on the neighborhood from increased use, traffic and parking. Several FOSC members and public speakers suggested that these issues, while based on legitimate concerns, may have little to do with the proposed project, which seeks to reduce impacts from the heavier use of the ENP. Several FOSC members urged the neighborhood residents and the involved biking organizations to meet and to work together to solve these issues.
- 5. Future Town Officials Tour of Frank Egger Redwood Preserve and Gloria Duncan Creekside Preserve Open Space** (on Olema Road): Michael Ardito (discussion and possible action). Frank Egger, upon recommendation of FOSC, scheduled the Town officials tours for two alternate dates: Saturday, August 7 or Sunday, August 8 to try and avoid quorums. We need to check with the Town attorney to determine who and where they can attend this guided tour.
- 6. Update on Bio-Blitz events** (discussion and possible action) Susan Pascal Beran and Heather Duplaisir. An event was tentatively scheduled for July 10 behind Victory Village. However, the attorneys for Victory Village were reportedly concerned about liability and may or may not give permission for this activity.

- 7. Vacant Parcel Offered for Donation to Town on lower Cypress Drive** (discussion and possible action). The Acquisitions Subcommittee members and other FOSC members visited the property. Based on these observations, FOSC members concluded that the property had: very high natural resource values (woodland riparian habitat and diversity of plants and animals); provided significant open space recreational opportunities, including hiking along the trail that crosses the property and enjoyment of the natural beauty on the property and adjacent areas; had cultural value to the extent that it and other protected lands nearby added to the greenbelt between the Cascade Canyon/Cypress Drive developed areas and undeveloped lands to the west and north; and offered wildlife corridor and trail connectivity to other contiguous vacant lands and publicly accessible open space lands to the north and west. (Ruth reported that for connectivity, the Town owns an adjacent parcel, the former Evelyn David property.) There were no prevailing reasons not to accept this offer of land donation – the cost was minimal and the risk to the Town relatively minor. Jack Judkins made a motion and Diego Gonzalez seconded, and FOSC voted unanimously to recommend to the Town Council that the Town accept this land donation and to authorize the use of FOSC funds, if needed, to pay for minor transactional costs (such as title report, recordation of deed) of approximately \$500. Jack will prepare and submit to the Town the property acquisition criteria form and a request that the Town staff provide assistance in bringing this matter to the Town Council.
- 8. Concrete Pipe Road update** (discussion and possible action). Jack Judkins will follow-up with the Marin Municipal Water District to find out the status of the blocked trail access issues and report back at the next FOSC meeting.
- 9. Treasurer’s Report:** Diego Gonzalez indicated there was nothing new to report.
- 10. FOSC Outreach, Merchandise, Photo Survey Project, and Nature Walks** (discussion and possible action). Nothing new to report.
- 11. Measure A Subcommittee Meeting Report:** Susan Pascal Beran and Brad Handel (discussion and possible action). Susan and Brad reported that FOSC received \$17,500 in Measure A funds from the Town.
- 12. Assignments and Reports from FOSC Committees / Subcommittees** (discussion and possible action): Acquisitions; Governance; Stewardship; Community Outreach & Fundraising. The Acquisitions Subcommittee has asked that an agenda item be added next month for FOSC discussion and action of possible Marin Open Space Trust funding for the Town’s acquisition of two tax-defaulted parcels on unimproved Upper Ridgeway. The Town owns two adjacent parcels which also connect to San Anselmo’s Hawthorne Canyon Open Space and Fairfax’s Upper Ridgeway Trail. The Governance Subcommittee has asked that next month FOSC approve an “Agenda Item Request Form” and written guidance for FOSC meeting procedures.
- 13. FOSC Framework for SMART Annual Goals for FY 2021-22:** Jonathan Sicroff and Jack Judkins (discussion and possible action). FOSC and each of the Subcommittees will go forward with SMART annual goals.
- 14. Reports of activities from partner agencies** such as San Anselmo Open Space Committee (SAOSC); Marin Conservation League’s Parks and Open Space Committee; Together Bay Area; One Tam: FOSC representatives (discussion and possible action). Michael Ardito provided a verbal summary report from the MCL’s Parks and Open Space Committee meeting held on June 10, 2021. One focus of the meeting was Governor Newsom’s “30 x 30” executive order from last October to achieve protection of 30 percent of state’s land and water areas by 2030. Fortunately, Marin County already has 30 percent of our county preserved for open space. Therefore, Marin’s focus is on preserving biodiversity in light of climate change. Another announcement of general interest was the current effort for conversion of the Tiburon-Angel Island ferry from diesel fuel to electric propulsion.
- 15. Approval of FOSC Meeting Minutes** from previous meetings (discussion and possible action): Michael Ardito had provided upgraded versions for FOSC minutes from the March 23 and April 27, 2021 meetings. The minutes from both meetings were approved for finalization and posting to the Town’s website.

- 16. Next Regular FOSC Meeting on Tuesday, July 27, 2021:** Quorum Check, Future Agenda Items (discussion and possible action): It appears that two members (Heather Duplaisir and Diego Gonzalez) may be absent at our next meeting, but a quorum should be achieved on July 27.
- 17. FOSC Member Reports on Non-Agenda Items** (no discussions or actions). Jonathan Sicroff announced that he is moving out of Fairfax as of July 1 and is submitting his resignation from FOSC.
- 18. Appointment of New Youth Member** (discussion and probable action). Dylann Cullinane introduced herself at the end of the meeting. An interview panel of Michael Ardito and Ruth Horn interviewed Dylann by Zoom on June 15 using the standard youth member list of questions. Everyone was favorably impressed with Dylann's public speaking, her excellent answers and examples of her leadership such as with 4-H over the last eight years. The FOSC voted unanimously to appoint Dylann as the youth member for the 2021-2022 school year.
- 19. Adjournment in Memory of Jolie Egert Elan, former FOSC member.** Many kudos were mentioned about former member Jolie Egert Elan by current members on FOSC serving with Jolie. She was long-time environmentalist and was the founding director of Go Wild Institute. She passed at age 51 on November 30, 2020 in Ashland, Oregon after a brief but serious illness. Due to her move from Fairfax and California, our FOSC members were unaware for months that she had passed away. More information about Jolie and her life may be found in her obituary via Google and her professional career on LinkedIn.
- 20. Adjournment was at 9:22 p.m.**